For A New COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL!

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I

The Communist International Is Dead

The Communist International is dead! Who could have believed it ten or even five years ago? The advanced sections of the workingclass all over the world stand stunned and bewildered as the enormity of this fact sinks deeper and deeper into their consciousness. Fascism is victorious in Europe today. The Communist International, leader of countless battles, guided by the doctrines of Marx and Lenin,—this Communist International now lies at the feet of History, totally destroyed. Without a Communist International there can be no successful proletarian revolution. And every conscious worker and poor farmer knows, that if the proletarian revolution does not put an end to the horrors of fascist imperialism, there will be a horror without end for the masses of people throughout the world.

The Communist International was the culmination of the work of the Russian Bolsheviks who for over twenty years, under the leadership of Lenin, fought relentlessly and successfully against every sign of opportunism. It was the Bolsheviks, together with Trotsky, who were in the very front ranks of the 1905 revolution and who gave the theory to the movement of the masses. It was the Bolsheviks, in the days of reaction (1906-1912), after the defeat of the revolution, who stood their ground and refused to give up their principles. When all around them fled, they only dug in all the deeper among the workers, and with an iron will, flexible tactics, and clear vision, prepared the way for the next attack. It was the Bolsheviks who stood firmly against the last world war, and when on August 4th, 1914, practically all the Socialist parties of the world, poisoned with nationalism, shouldered their rifles to kill their fellow-workers, their fellow socialists and brothers of other countries, it was the Bolsheviks who declared: The Socialist (yellow) International is dead. Long live the new Communist International!

It was the Bolsheviks who first stopped the imperialist slaught-

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er in 1917. It was the Bolsheviks who first turned the imperialist war into civil war and who, teaching the Russian workers to destroy their own real enemies and not their German brethren, finally overthrew Czarism, abolished capitalism, and established the first workers State in the history of the world. The dictatorship of the proletariat which guaranteed the permanence of the revolution, was able to crush an army of over 2,000,000 foreign interventionary troops and white guards—the largest army ever put into the field at any given moment in the whole history of the world.

Finally, it was the Russian Bolsheviks, together with such revolutionists as Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg who extended the revolution beyond the confines of Russia. In Germany, Finland, Hungary, Italy, and practically throughout all Europe a vast civil war was fought. In the course of this fight the Communist International was forged in 1919, a Communist International that everywhere became the champion of the poor, the weak, the oppressed toilers.

And now, both the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International are in ruins. Instead of the Communist International, organizer of the proletariat to victory, there stands the Stalinist International organizer of defeats, disasters, and betrayals. In stead of international Marxism there is National Socialism—the theory of Socialism in one country. Instead of Communism advancing, it is Fascism that is advancing. With Lenin dead· Trotsky deported, Rakovsky in exile, thousands of revolutionary Communists in jail, Stalin opens the gates of the Soviet Union itself to the bloody hosts of Fascist reaction.

The murder of the Communist International by Stalinism, of course, could not be accomplished overnight. Several "dress rehearsals" for the tragedy were necessary. It was first necessary to stab the General Strike of the British workers in 1926, and to decapitate the Chinese Revolution of 1927. It was necessary to kill the great revolutionary movement in Germany in 1933 and finally, to destroy the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union.

The destruction of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia means that the Communist International under Stalin has met its

August 4th 1914. As a real revolutionary current, as the organizer of the workers' revolution throughout the world, it is dead. And today it is the International Left Opposition which proudly carries forward the work of Lenin and will rebuild a new Bolshevik International.

Capitalism, putrid, stinking, long ago fit for the grave, has developed the leprosy of Fascism. All the agonies of a dying system must now reach their highest pitch. The same convulsions of a dying capitalism which have brought about the collapse of both the Second and the Third International, also force the workers to fight on for liberation. And the future is with this fight.

If the International under Marx laid the foundation and in 1871, helped to guide the first attempt of the workers to take power in the Paris Commune, if the International under Lenin actually won the battle in the Soviet Union and prepared the victory elsewhere, it is the International under Trotsky and the International Left Opposition which will make the revolution permanent and enduring throughout the world.

II.

The Chinese Revolution Is Beheaded (1)

In 1927-1928 it is estimated that about 100,000 Chinese Communists and workers were executed by Chiang Kai Shek and the Kuo Min Tang. Only a short time before, Stalin had sent Chiang Kai Shek his picture with an expression of regards The ink had not long been dry on his speech praising Chiang Kai Shek as revolutionary fighter, when Chiang Kai Shek wiped out the very flower of the Chinese Revolution.

Here is an outline of the events: In 1925 in China a great movement began among the workers and toilers against the foreign

(1) *See Leon Trotsky: "Problems of the Chinese Revolution."*

imperialists and capitalists. The movement took on a tremendous sweep and, moving north from Canton to Shanghai, embraced the entire population. In the course of the struggle the workingclass organized itself into militant unions millions strong. The poor peasantry, now politically awakened, also armed themselves, and joining hands with the workers, entered heroically into the fight. At the head of the entire movement stood the Kuo Min Tang, which years ago had been organized by the progressive liberal, Sun Yat Sen, in his struggle for a republic. The Kuo Min Tang was a political party which had for its program the "three principles" of Sun Yat Sen, namely: "Nationalism, Democracy, and Socialism". It is from this program that we can see that the Kuo Min Tang was not really a workers' party but a confused progressive party of the lower middle class. During the events of the revolution of 1925 the Kuo Min Tang rose to enormous size. Millions of workers, peasants, intellectuals, students, professional men, small and even big business men entered it as well as many of the old-time militarist cliques. At the head of the Kuo Min Tang were the big business men and the military generals who wanted to control the movement for their own benefit and who were but the tools of the foreign imperialist powers. In the heart of the Kuo Min Tang were to be found terribly poor and oppressed elements who had been aroused into activity by the struggle against the foreign imperialists but who also had their own interests to look after. The interests of the workers and peasants were quite different from the interests of the big business men and generals. These workers wanted the right to organize and to strike and demanded certain social reforms to make their wretched conditions better. The peasants wanted the end of taxes and rents and debts and the right to keep the products of their labor. The needs of the toilers compelled them to fight not only against the American, English, and Japanese capitalists but the Chinese capitalists, landlords and militarists as well.

What should the Communists the real revolutionary leaders, have done under the circumstances? They should have organized their own forces into a Communist Party, with their own Communst press and official organ. They should have based them-

selves upon the workers and the poor peasants and tried to win them for Communism. They should have organized Soviets at the very beginning, the moment they saw that the movement was a real revolutionary one. Soviets are delegated bodies of workers, poor peasants and soldiers, which meet separately from the capitalists and their agents and work out their own program. The Communists should have urged the workers to take control over the production of the factories. They should have aided the peasants to confiscate the land of the counter-revolutionary landlords and big estate owners, and annul all the rents, taxes, and debts. In short, the Communists should have come out with their own banner and their own program that would have led the masses on to the seizure of power and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Under Stalin, the Communist International forced the Chinese Communist Party to do just the opposite. The Communist International forced the Chinese Communist Party to join the Kuo Min Tang and to accept the liberal middle class principles of "Sun Yat Senism" rather than the revolutionary principles of Communism. The Communist International forbade the Communist Party to issue its own press and to take a critical position to the leaders of the "right wing", the Chiang Kai Sheks and others. When the peasants wanted to seize the land, the Communist Party ordered them not to. When the workers wanted to take control of the factories, they were told this was against the revolution. When the workers and peasants, on their own accord, moved by a correct instinct, wanted to form their own committees for struggle (Soviets), Stalinism told them that they were breaking up the revolutionary front and by so doing were counter-revolutionary.

Stalinism preached to the masses that they must join the Kuo Min Tang headed by Chiang Kai Shek. The Communist International even took in the Kuo Min Tang into its own ranks and made the Kuo Min Tang a "sympathetic" party with voice but no vote in the meetings of the Communist International itself. In every possible way the Communists told the masses that the Kuo Min Tang and Chiang Kai Shek were the real revolu-

tionary agencies to throw out the foreign imperialists and to lead them to emancipation.

In this way the Communists used the glorious prestige of the Russian Revolution to destroy the Chinese Revolution; they used the Soviets of Russia to prevent the formation of the Soviets of China. The Communist Party fooled the masses and taught them to believe that the Kuo Min Tang would not betray them but would really satisfy their needs. The militarist dogs in the leadership of the Kuo Min Tang were able to do just what they pleased. They were protected by the Communists. The Communist Party leaders became the veritable coolies of the Chinese reactionaries and the foreign imperialists.

In these things the Communist International acted worse in 1927 than even the Mensheviks (Socialists) did in the 1905 Russian Revolution. The Mensheviks, at least, never opposed the strikes of the workmen. They never opposed the formation of Soviets. They never opposed the formation of revolutionary parties independent of and critical of the capitalist class. They never decided not to build up their own press. They never declared that the workers could take power through any other party than the Marxist Party. In this way we can guage to what depths the degeneration of the Communist International had sunk already.

But what were the arguments of Stalin? He declared that the fight in China was not a fight for socialism, it was not a fight of the toilers against their oppressors, but only a fight for democracy, a fight of the whole Chinese people including workers, bosses, landlords, peasants, debtors, usurers, clerks and military generals against foreign imperialism and for the independence of China. Therefore there could be organized a "Bloc of four classes" i. e. a bloc of the workers and peasants to unite with their class enemies in their common fight, and the leadership of this fight would have to be given to the Kuo Min Tang led by the militarists and big bosses of China. In this way Stalin betrayed the class struggle. He fooled the workers and peasants of China into believing that Chiang Kai Shek really would fight the imperialists. As a matter of fact the Chinese capitalists, landlords and militarists are connected with a million bonds to the

foreign imperialists. The Chinese rulers might want a greater profit for themselves but they fear the poor Chinese much more than they fear the rich Englishmen, or American, or Japanese. The leaders of the Kuo Min Tang simply wanted the workers of China to give up their lives so that the rich should get more concessions.

Stalin forgot the whole history of the Russian Revolution. He also forgot the fact that even though the Revolution could begin as a democratic one it was bound to end up as a Socialist one (1). That was the strategy of Lenin. That was the whole point to the theories of Marx and Trotsky. Only the proletariat could lead the struggle for democracy to victory, only the proletariat could lead the people of the colonies to independence and through this struggle for democracy and independence the proletariat would have to advance to soviets, to the dictatorship of the workers allied with the poor peasants, and thus to Socialism.

How did it come about that the leaders of the Russian revolution could so abandon their principles? The answer is found in the fact that the Russian leaders had degenerated into a bureaucracy. Headed by Stalin, they no longer wanted to be disturbed by future wars and fighting. They wanted to keep Russia out of the class struggle. They knew that if the Chinese people really kicked out Chiang Kai Shek and began a real war against the foreign powers it would inevitably involve the Russian workers in the struggle behind the Chinese people. These bureaucrats wanted quiet. They thought they could build up Socialism in one country. Their motto was: "We got ours; let the others worry about theirs". They abandoned their internationalism for a yellow opportunist nationalism.

Due to these actions and policies of the Communist International the Chinese Revolution came to a terrible catastrophe in 1927. As the Kuo Min Tang swept northward and became more and more powerful, the Chiang Kai Sheks began more and more to turn their guns against the poor workers and peasants who were forming their own organizations. However, the real action against the masses could not be undertaken until the Kuo

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(1) *See Leon Trotsky: "The Permanent Revolution".*

Min Tang won Shanghai. Acting under the belief that the Kuo Min Tang Party was for the workers, and having faith in the Communists, the workers of Shanghai rose in a great general strike in April 1927, overthrew the reactionaries, and established a People's government. The Communists, who were strong in this government, did nothing except send word to Chiang Kai Shek that it was now safe to enter the city. Chiang Kai Shek took possession of the city and then proceeded to slaughter thousands and thousands of Communists and workers. It was a dreadful affair always to be remembered by the world proletariat. But even this was not enough for the Stalinists to learn. As the people were recoiling in horror from the Kuo Min Tang of Chiang Kai Shek, the Communist International appealed to them not to lose faith in the Kuo Min Tang, that there were other generals, the Christian General Feng, Wang Chin Wei, and others, who would save them. But by the end of May, Wang Chin Wein had played the same game as Chiang Kai Shek, and new massacres of Communists and workers took place in Nanking and Hankow. By this time the Communist Party of China and the masses had received a mortal blow, the best of its membership having been beheaded.

Suddenly in August 1927 the Communist International changed its course, trying desperately to save a situation it had already lost. Now when the Chinese Party was so weakened, when it had lost its best men, it was ordered to prepare for an armed uprising. The result of this was the uprising in December 1927 in Canton where Soviets were suddenly called for. These Soviets were organized so hastily that nobody knew anything about them. Soviets should arise with the surging forward of the revolutionary movement itself. The Soviets in Canton however, were all appointed from above. The masses themselves did not elect them. They were formed artificially when the revolution was already decidedly defeated. The net result was a new massacre of the people in Canton that definitely crushed the last remnants of the revolution.

The present situation in China shows the masses are again lifting their heads and beginning to renew the struggle. The movement is now reappearing in the country among the exploited

peasantry, and Stalinism, always following the tail end of events, is now developing new blunders and new crimes. Instead of concentrating on the city to win the proletariat, the Communist Party is concentrating in the country. They are deluding themselves into thinking that peasants can create socialist soviets, that not the workers will free the peasants but the peasantry will free the workers. Again they show their contempt for the working-class in the cities and march their peasant armies to "free" the workers from without. They have not yet learned that it is the workers who are brought together in masses in the factories and cities, and are organized and disciplined as the peasants, isolated property-holders, can never be, who must take the leading roles. Instead of learning how to fight the Chinese capitalists the Communist Party is busily engaged in fighting and killing members of the Communist Left Opposition. Stalinism in China has shown that it is beyond hope.

World-wide Capitulation

It was not only in China that Stalinism was surrendering the class struggle. It was the same in Great Britain during the great general strike there which took place in 1926, at the very moment when the events were breaking out in China. Before the strike had broken out in Great Britain the Russian and the English trade unionists had formed an Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee for the purpose of forming one trade union international. Through their associationship with the Russian Communists on the same committee, the British General Council, composed of the reactionary trade union officials, was given the same kind of red paint as the Kuo Mn Tang received in China. When the great strike broke out it was betrayed and broken at the end of nine days by the British General Council acting for the British Government and capitalist class. All this time the Russian Communists did not break with the British fakers and traitors. No criticism was made of the misleaders of the trade union movement. As in China, so in Great Britain, the Communists acted as the coolies of the reactionaries, and enabled the misleaders to defeat the movements of the workers. The British workers were set back for years to come.

It was the same everywhere, (1), in the Balkans, in India, in the United States. The Communist International betrayed the interests of the workers and aided their very enemies. In the Balkans, the Communist International took in as a "sympathetic" Party the capitalistic Party of Raditch, agrarian kulak leader who later turned against the peasants and the Communists, his supporters. In India, the Communist International believed that it would be harmful to organize a Communist Party there but organized a "Workers and Farmers" Party built somewhat along the lines of the Kuo Min Tang. It was the failure of the Communists to act independently, and their reliance upon bourgeois leaders instead of upon the masses of toilers that enabled Gandhi and others to force India to capitulate before British Imperialism. In the United States, the Communists were ordered to support that petty bourgeois capitalist agent, Lafollette. Everywhere the Communists began to smirk and bow before their enemies, to work with their enemies against the true interests of the workingclass of the world.

III.

The Assassination Of The German Revolutionary Movement

Since March 1933, Hitler and his gunmen have been in power in Germany. All workingclass and liberal organizations have been destroyed. The trade unions have been smashed to bits, their buildings seized and the treasuries confiscated. The Socialist Party has been dissolved. Over 2000 Communists have been killed and 40,000 are held in concentration camps. Many more have been beaten and terrorized throughout the land. Reaction is in the saddle.

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(1) *See Leon Trotsky*: *"The Draft Program of the Comintern"*; *"Strategy of the World Revolution"*.

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Let us clearly visualize just what this terrible defeat means. Germany is the key country in Europe. The way Germany goes, so must go the rest of Europe. Had Germany turned Soviet in 1918 it would have plunged the whole world into a war on the question of world Soviets or world Capitalist rule. In 1923, when the German Revolution was definitely defeated, this marked a decisive turning point of revolutionary struggle. From that time on the capitalist world was able to breathe deeper and to rest a bit easier. When, in 1933, it became clear that the economic and political conditions were so unbearable that the class struggle would have to reach the height of a revolution and either Communism or Fascism would have to prevail, the whole world waited with tense anxiety to find out which side would win.

The German workingclass was the most powerful and important in all of Europe. It was the strongest organized. It controlled the most important and basic industries of Europe. It was the majority of the decisive districts of Germany. It had the highest intellectual level. It was thoroughly convinced of the doctrines of Karl Marx. It had been disciplined through periods of the greatest stress and storm. The German workers had gone through the war and knew how to face bullets. They had gone through three revolutions. Six million of them had voted Communist in the last election, eight million had voted socialist. Fourteen million thus stood behind the doctrines of Socialism.

On the other hand the German ruling class had lost the war. It had lost its Kaiser. Its big businessmen had no great prestige or standing and no tradition of ruling. They were in great debt to foreign powers. Their strongest forces were not in the decisive parts of the country. Their army was small (100,000). Their political troops like those of the Nazis of Hitler were made up mainly of students, youth, declassed petty bourgeois, and lumpen proletarian elements who in no way were a match for the well organized and trained workmen. Yet it was this scum, this trash of the Nazis, that was able to defeat the strongest workingclass of the world—to defeat it overwhelmingly and to crush it mercilessly. The whole world looked on with amazement and saw the wonderful German Communist Party of 250,000 GIVE UP WITHOUT EVEN A FIGHT. To lose in an open battle is

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one thing; to capitulate under such circumstances without a fight is an unpardonable disgrace. Perhaps the workers could forgive Stalin the loss of the Chinese Revolution but they can never forgive the loss of the very heart and soul of the international proletarian forces, the loss of the German Revolution. And all this, time, while the German revolutionary movement was being destroyed, the Communist International hardly even printed the news of the events, called no emergency congress nor even opened a discussion on the matter. So far has the theory of Socialism in One Country gone that Stalin evidently does not care what happens to the world outside of Russia. He has become totally blind to the fact that the safety of the Soviet Union itself depends upon the international proletariat; that the death of the German revolutionary movement inevitably means a united attack against the Soviet Union by the international capitalists.

Such a monumental betrayal of the interests of the German and international proletariat could not have come about all at once. It had to be prepared by a false line of policy and false actions for years. It is not difficult to trace the steps by which the Communist Party descended lower and lower into degeneration. (1)

After the disaster of the Chinese Revolution, after the failures due to its relations with the La Follettes, Raditches, British Trade Union bureaucrats, Gandhis, Chiang Kai Sheks and such, the Communist International swung to the other extreme. The C. I. declared that all people not in the Communist Party were one reactionary mass against the Communists.

In Germany the Communist Party began to split the German trade unions. At that time (1929) 8,000,000 workers were in the German Trade Unions which were controlled by reformists of the Socialist Party. Because the Socialists controlled the unions, the Communists took out their members and sympathizers, 300,000 strong, from the trade unions, and organized their own paper unions with them. This action split the workers movement wide open. It only cemented the control of the reformists

(1) *See Leon Trotsky: "Germany, the key to the International situation"; "What Next"; "The Only Road".*

over the workers who still remained in the unions. It isolated the Communists from the mass of workers and transformed them from leaders and active members of trade unions, into little sects. The paper unions were helpless to prevent the bosses from launching their attacks and because of the split in their ranks, the workers lost battle after battle.

The Communist Party then declared that the chief enemy of the German workers was not the Fascists of Hitler but the Socialist Party. The German workers must first of all destroy the Socialist Party.

The Socialist Party was called "social fascists", that is, part of the fascist forces. In this way the German working class was further divided and the fascists had an easy time of it. When the fascists shot the socialist workers in the street, the Communists did not help. When the fascists then shot the Communists, of course the socialists did not help.

But the Communists went even further than this in helping the fascists win power. They actually united with them in a referendum in 1930 to destroy the Landtag, the Prussian Parliament. And in this way both Communists and Fascists could be seen voting for the same bill against the socialists and democrats. What made the matter all the worse was the fact that if the Communists and fascists had really won in the referendum for the abolition of the German Parliament it would not have been Soviets that would have been established under the control of the Communists, but a fascist dictatorship.

Again, in the slogan "Gegen Versailles" (Against the Versailles Treaty), the Stalinists made a united front with the Nazis. To make such a slogan as the chief slogan meant to cater to all the nationalist prejudices which the Nazis were arousing. It meant that the German masses were to look for their enemies abroad and not within the country. Finally, the Communist Party actually aped the fascists in raising the slogan of a "Volks Revolution" (People's Revolution). To issue such a call at a time when the situation was ripe not for a "people's revolution" but for a proletarian revolution was all the more criminal here in Germany, since that country is one of the most advanced in-

dustrial countries and could have proceeded from the Republic directly to the struggle for proletarian power.

In all of their attacks against the socialists, the Communists forgot that the mass of workers were still behind the socialists and that it was necessary, not by means of ultimatums and threats but by means of patient work, to convince the socialist workers that the Socialist Party had betrayed them. In declaring that the Socialist Party was fascist, the Communists forgot that the Socialist Party rested on the trade unions and had as its base trade union members and a program for improving the lot of the workers, while the fascists had as their program the destruction of the trade unions, the worsening of the conditions of the workers, war against the Soviet Union, and the smashing of all workers organizations, socialist as well as Communist.

Certainly no honest worker can deny that the Socialist Party in its actions and in its program prepares the way for fascism. The Socialist Party showed this when it patriotically mobilized millions of German workers during the war to fight for "God and Kaiser." It showed this when its leaders, Scheidemann and Noske, shot and murdered Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht and killed hundreds of thousands of workers who were trying to establish a proletarian regime in 1918. It showed this in its hatred and fear of Soviet Russia and its bitter attack against the Communists. To the very end the Socialist Party showed its yellow color by actually voting for Hindenburg in the last elections and putting up no candidates of its own. All this is true. But while the Socialist Party must be destroyed, nevertheless, in the face of the Hitler menace against all working class organizations, it was first of all necessary to unite all workers organizations, Socialist and Communist, into one united front against fascism. It was necessary to wipe out the Nazi gangsters from the face of the earth and then the workers would be able to decide what party really represented their interests, really had fought against fascism successfully, really had the correct policy, really could take over the factories and run them under workers control.

So, because the Communists split the ranks of the workers, directed their fire against the socialists instead of against the fascists, and actually united at times with the fascists against the

socialists, the fascists were able to take over power and destroy both socialists and Communists.

In their blindness mountains of errors were committed by the Stalinists. Just as they made no distinction between socialist and fascist, so they made no distinction between democrat and fascist. Everybody not a Communist was a fascist. When Hindenburg was to be elected, Hindenburg was a fascist. When Bruening was a minister, Bruening was a fascist; Von Papen was fascist; Von Schleicher was fascist, etc. In this way the Communist Party confused everyone. If you cry wolf all the time when there is no wolf, then no one believes you when the wolf really comes. Besides, under Bruening, people could vote, they could organize. There was still some democracy for the people. If Bruening was fascist then the people began to believe fascism was not as bad as painted, that under fascism the trade unions could still strike and conditions could still be won. Thus the Communists covered over the real meaning of fascism and actually prepared the way for the victory of fascism. Again, if the people in power were fascist, then evidently it was foolish to believe you could keep the fascists out of power and so this idiotic idea paralyzed the people's fight against fascism. To cap the climax, the Communists raised the theory (1) that it would be all right if the fascists actually took power because only then would the masses see how demagogic, how false the policies of the fascists were and would revolt against them. By means of all these stupid theories, Stalinism actually aided the fascists to seize power and wreak their vengeance upon the workers.

What is the situation today? Today Germany is in the hands of the Fascists. Fascism in Germany means Fascism in all of middle Europe and reaction in all of the capitalist countries there. The Communist Party of Austria and the Communist Party of Bulgaria already have been driven underground and destroyed. The Socialist Parties also have been attacked, the trade unions as

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(1) *"If they the Nazis once come into power, the united front of the proletariat will be established and sweep everything away... They will come to grief more speedily than any other government".—Remmele in Reichstag, Rote Fahne, Oct.* 16, 1931.

well. The press and organizations, so painfully built up, have now been sacrificed.

But the destruction of the organizations of the workers of Europe means that the chief brake that stopped intervention by reactionaries against Russia has been taken away. The Soviet Union, resting as it did upon the international proletariat, now finds that the support has crumbled away. Can Soviet Russia continue to exist without a militant proletariat throughout the world ready to aid it? Clearly no. The destruction of the German proletariat is the first step toward the destruction of the Soviet Union itself.

And in all this time, while the very flower of the world proletariat was being destroyed, the Communist International never even held a meeting to consider the question. For five years now, since 1928, there has been no World Congress of the Communist International. The Communist Party under Stalin is interested only in Russia and even that interest is on such a narrow basis that it can only lead to the destruction of the Soviet Republic itself. Instead of a World Congress to take up the vital questions of the day, to analyze the reasons of the defeats and to take the proper course in the future, there have taken place only pitiful meetings of functionaries who have declared that there have been no mistakes, there have been no losses, everything is going along fine and dandy according to plan. THOUSANDS OF COMMUNISTS KILLED, TENS OF THOUSANDS IN JAIL, FASCISM VICTORIOUS, AND STALIN DECLARES EVERYTHING IS GOING ALONG AS PREDICTED.

What can we say of a leadership that can only organize defeats and disasters? We say that such a leadership is politically dead. It must be thrown away as a rotten corpse. The events in Germany mark the turning point of world Communism.

IV.

The Destruction Of The Dictatorship Of The Proletariat In The Soviet Union (1)

While these enormous events—the death of the Chinese Revolution and the advance of Japanese imperialism in the East, the death of the German Revolution and the advance of Fascism in the West—were going on outside, grave and serious events have taken place within the Soviet Union as well. The Soviet Republic, still the workers Fatherland, has been undermined not only from without but also from within. And so well has Stalin succeeded, that today the dictatorship of the proletariat has been displaced by a dictatorship of the bureaucracy; the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as a Party, is no more.

With the collapse of the first great international revolutionary wave which began just after the war and lasted up to the defeat of the German Revolution in 1923, the Socialist Soviet Union became isolated. The Communist International under Lenin had hoped that an international proletarian revolution would have supported the proletarian revolution in Russia. Lenin and Trotsky knew the world could not endure half soviet and half capitalist for any length of time. The fight would have to go on to the bitter finish. If the revolution in Russia were to be made permanent, it would have to be not national but international in scope and take in not only Russia but the rest of Europe and of the world. If the workers of the world would not aid the Soviet Regime then the Soviets would ultimately go under. It was for that reason that Lenin and Trotsky paid so much attention to international affairs and led the Red Army westward to the very gates of Warsaw. It was because they knew the international

(1) *See Leon Trotsky: "My Life", "History of the Russian Revolution"; "1905".*

revolution could be realized if the Communists pursued a correct policy that they were ready to seize and to hold power in Russia itself. The Russian Revolution would bring about the victorious European and World revolution which in turn would consolidate the Russian victory and make of Russia a backward Socialist country just as it had been a backward capitalist country before.

The set-back of the first revolutionary wave and the beginning of the period of partial and temporary stabilization of capitalism after the war also coincided with the death of Lenin. This gave an enormous blow to the Communist forces in Russia and they began to crack. The Communists began to yield to the merchants and new petty property holders within Russia. The leaders began to tire of the revolutionary struggle, to become "practical" men, and to think in terms of Russian nationalism rather than of the class struggle. They began to dream of the possibility of building Socialism in one country alone and to separate Russia, where the workers had won, from the rest of the world.

As a matter of fact Socialist Russia has existed side by side with the capitalist world for sixteen years. This fact is due to a peculiar equilibrium which prevailed for the moment and which the bureaucrat and tired Communist who did not want to fight anymore, thought would last forever. In this peculiar equilibrium of world forces the international capitalist class could not overthrow Soviet Russia and the international proletariat could not overthrow the rest of the capitalist world.

The foreign capitalists in 1918-1921 tried to overthrow the Soviets. They failed due to certain circumstances such as (a) the enormous and inaccessible territory and the economic self-sufficiency of the country (b) the numerical and moral strength of the population led by a hardened Communist Party (c) the failure of the bourgeoisie internationally to unite in time (d) the weakening of the bourgeoisie in other countries by the revolutionary movements of the masses (e) finally, the loyal and tremendous support of the international working class. It was due to all these reasons that the capitalists could not overthrow the Soviets the first time they tried it.

On the other hand the Soviet Union and the international working class was not able to overthrow the capitalists due (a) to

the weakness of the Communist movement outside Russia (b) the economic weakness of Russia itself and (c) the fact that the United States, the great capitalist reservoir of the world, was able to throw into Europe all its forces and save the day. (d) Finally, what enabled this equilibrium to go on for such a long time was the fact that the Russian market was not decisive for world economy. It represented only 4% of the world's total. The capitalists could do without the Russian market for a much longer time than if they had been deprived of a Germany or of an England.

However, such a balance of forces could not go on forever. If the capitalist world could recuperate from the disastrous effects of the world war and partially stabilize itself, if the revolutionary movements could be given a decisive beating and wiped out, then of course the balance would shift in favor of the capitalists and they would be able to unite their forces to wage war against Russia to overthrow it. If we were to add to these factors the internal weakening of the Soviet Union itself, the destruction of the Communist Party, the bureaucratization of all workers organizations, and the growth of alien class forces and ideologies within Russia, then of course the downfall of the Soviet Union would be assured. This is precisely the danger at the present time. And Stalinism is to be overthrown precisely because it is through Stalinism that the world revolution has been and will be further defeated. It is no accident that just before his death Lenin called on Comrade Trotsky to make the fight against Stalin and the growth of bureaucracy in Russia. And further, in his last testament, he called on the central committee of the Bolsheviks to remove Stalin as Secretary as too rude and too disloyal. (1)

After the defeat of the international revolution, Stalin, losing faith in the world proletariat, began to declare that the workers of Russia did not need the aid of the world revolution, that they could build Socialism in one country alone. He began to turn to the kulak and the peasant in his internal policy. The slogan was issued "Face to the village". The peasantry and the kulaks were

(1) *See Stalin's recognition of Lenin's letter in Inprecorr Nov.* 1927.

told "Enrich yourselves", and the idea was launched that Russia could build Socialism through the kulak even though at a "snail's pace". It was at this time that Stalin began his war against the "Trotskyites", that is against that group of hardened Bolsheviks who fought Stalin's nationalistic Socialism.

On one side, the Bolshevik-Leninists, under Trotsky, (1) raised the slogan of the industrialization of Russia and the necessity of a five year plan. On the other side, around Stalin there gathered all the Nep men, all the capitalistic elements, all the kulaks, all the hostile and alien groupings, all the tired bureaucrats who above all wanted "no more revolution" but peace and comfort and to be let alone. The charge was launched against Trotsky that he wanted to start a civil war in Russia, that he wanted to break the "smytchka", that is, the alliance between the workers and the peasants of Russia.

How was this charge proved? The Stalinists said: if you are to industrialize Russia where will you get the funds? They will have to come from the sale of the surplus products which will be used to buy machinery, build factories, etc. How will you get these surplus products? By taxing the peasantry. If you tax the peasantry, the peasantry will revolt under the leadership of the kulak, and the alliance between workers and peasants will be broken.

But this argument was entirely reactionary. It showed that already Stalin and Co. were the objective agents of the petty bourgeois peasantry and capitalistic kulak. If you did not industrialize Russia then of course all the finished goods would be high in price. The peasants want their finished goods from the city as cheap as possible. They would then call for the abolition of the monopoly of foreign trade to buy these goods cheap. Russia would then be more and more an agrarian country and more and more would depend on Europe for its finished goods. It would also become relatively weaker and weaker in its factories and this would undermine the very basis of the Red Army and the internal defence of the Soviet Union. By all means it was necessary to increase

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(1) *See Leon Trotsky: "Whither Russia"; "Real Situation in Russia".*

production to build up the machine and heavy industry so as to build up the light industry that produces the articles of immediate consumption for the masses. Only by increasing the city production would it be possible to satisfy the peasantry and to keep the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Bolshevik-Leninists never tired of repeating that it is not the peasantry and not the kulak that must lead the workers but the workers must lead the peasantry.

In order to defeat the proletarian policy of Trotsky, Stalin was forced to take steps leading to the complete crushing of the Communist Party. For four whole years, from 1924 to 1928, no Congress of the International was held. Instead of this there took place periodic meetings of the top functionaries only. All discussion was broken up in the most brutal manner and into the Party for the first time there entered the rowdyism of Tammany Hall. The secret Soviet police began to sit in at the Party meetings themselves and to do the arresting. All the secretaries were appointed from the top. Whole units and sections were dissolved. Thousands of Party members were arrested and sent to jail for "Trotskyism". Others were actually condemned to death and shot. Trotsky himself, together with other leaders, was exiled to Siberia. Instead of a Communist Party there existed only the apparatus. The old Party workers were driven out of the Party by the hundreds of thousands and in their place anti-proletarian elements found their way.

However Stalin was forced to give in to the policies of the Left Opposition. After all the Soviet Union was still a workers State. Inside Russia, there still were no big capitalists. The workers who had gone through three revolutions could force their will to be heard. The bureaucrats, sitting above both the kulak elements and the proletariat, were forced to revise their plans by the determined action the workers, who knew that the Bolshevik Leninists were correct. At last Stalin and the others gave into the necessity for a five year plan.

In the plan proposed by the Left Opposition it had been pointed out that the essence of the plan consisted in a correct political approach, in a correct understanding of the relations between the

workers and the peasants, between industry and agriculture and of the harmony of all parts of the plan with the whole.

Since Stalin had replaced the free discussion of the vanguard of the proletariat in the Communist Party with the decrees of the Soviet Secret police (GPU) there was no longer any way by which the growing bureaucracy in the Soviet Union was able to make the delicate adjustments called upon. They were no longer able to tell just when the workers of one industry were not advancing far enough and just how to proportion the task of socialist construction. The result was a terrible dizzy zig-zag execution of the five year plan. (1) From the slogan "Socialism at a Snail's pace" Stalin ran to the slogan "Socialism by the five year plan". From the idea of "Hand in hand with the kulak we will build up socialism" he fled to the idea "Liquidate the kulak as a class within five years". The result was that all the evils that Trotsky had warned against and with which he had been charged by Stalin, Stalin actually brought about.

Instead of making out a plan that would balance the light and the heavy industry carefully, Stalin dizzily threw all the surplus goods possible into heavy industry. This led to a shortage of goods from the light industry which makes clothing and shoes, etc. and the result was a deep grumbling from the peasantry and the breaking of the firm alliance between the city and the country. The peasant was taxed to the breaking point. He saw himself deprived of his stock and stuff and receiving nothing in return but a "plan". He began to sabotage. He began to kill his stock and eat it himself. Before this move could be checked in 1932 approximately half of all the live-stock in Russia had been destroyed! He refused to till the soil. Hunger began to invade the cities.

Instead of a steady sure pace, Stalin had put the country on a war basis with the slogan of "The Five Year Plan in Four Years". The workers were forced to work harder than ever. All the bureaucrats began to try for "records". Quality did not count, only quantity. Shoes and clothing were produced which were not fit to be worn. A dreadful waste took place in all the factories.

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(1) *See Leon Trotsky: "Problems of Soviet Economy", "The Soviet Union in Danger".*

No control was put over the bureaucrats who soon were in alliance with groups of saboteurs all over the country. Thus the workers were not only worked harder but the stuff they got in return for their labor was but shoddy and waste. Instead of the five year plan with its increase of production actually benefiting the workers, the working class was pushed down more and more. The result was that the workers also began to sabotage. They refused to work. They began to move from factory to factory with the hope that the next place would be better than the last.

The Stalin bureaucracy has been forced to take drastic actions against the workers to suppress their discontent. Measures are being taken to prevent them from moving around. They are no longer allowed to strike. The trade unions have now been incorporated inside the state machinery. The GPU is everywhere.

Coupled with a disastrous policy in industry there went on a similar disastrous policy in agriculture. The peasants instead of being induced into cooperatives were compelled to join, often against their will. Their surplus products were confiscated and in return they were given practically worthless products from the factories. The slogan was raised "Socialism by the Five Year Plan" which, of course, meant the liquidation of not only the kulaks, but also the peasantry as a whole and their transformation into agricultural laborers. The basis of liquidating the kulaks could only be established by giving the poor peasants tractors by which they could out-produce the kulak and make the kulak no longer necessary in Russian economy. But since they did not have the tractors and since Stalin was opposed to the line of organizing the poorer peasantry against the kulak, what actually happened was not the liquidating of the kulak but the formation of artificial cooperatives into which the kulak had been driven and where he soon assumed the leadership.

Thus we had in the countryside the formation of cooperatives where the kulak, the enemy of both the workers and the poor peasants, actually was in the lead. Of course, the cooperatives, as a whole began to sabotage. That is why we have seen only recently (1932) the terrible dearth in the Ukraine and in the northern Caucusus. This was due to the peasantry absolutely refusing to cooperate with the State and to till the soil. The rich steppes be-

came barren. Weeds grew everywhere. Actual civil war did not break out, but wholesale migrations from the rich land of the south took place and the peasants moved elsewhere trying to better their lot.

On the top of all this is the ominous policy of inflation which Stalin has pursued, an inflation which has raised tremendously all the prices of necessities and made ridiculous any so-called advance in wages which he has given to the workers or advance in prices which he has given the peasant after the harvest.

More and more Stalin has been forced to crush the working-class movement within Russia. For three years the Russian Communists Party Congress has not met. For five years, ever since 1928, no Congress of the Communist International has been held. He dare not submit his policies to a vote. The Party has now been completely crushed. Within and outside the Communist Party Soviet Union there now exist fragments of two parties. One of them, led by the Left Opposition, reflects the interests of the proletariat. The other, meeting separately in its own groupings, makes up the party of reaction, of the capitalist and bureaucrat. This is the Party with which Stalin allies himself. It is this Party which is preparing the day when the Workers State will be destroyed and capitalism reestablished. Stalinism is preparing the way for Bonapartism, for a new Napoleon to arise in Russia to crush the proletariat.

Today, what we have in Russia is not the dictatorship of the proletariat but the dictatorship of the bureaucracy over the proletariat (still, however, within certain limits, for the benefit of the proletariat) THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT HAS BEEN DESTROYED.

V.

Only The New Bolshevik International Can Save The Situation

The conclusion to which we have come that the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union and the Bolshevik Party have been destroyed must lead us to understand what dangers we are facing at the present time. Let us analyze these dangers.

First of all the question arises, if the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union has been destroyed, how long will it be before the capitalists defeat the workers in Russia? Our answer is very plain. It is true that, so far, the bureaucracy under Stalin has not yet completed the return to capitalism. It is true that within Russia there is still a workers state. But the end of the Russian Communist Party, the end of the dictatorship of the proletariat, means that the key positions have been lost. It means that the enemy now controls these positions. It means that the whole Soviet Union is weakened and that when the fascists attack from without there will be no adequate forces to defend the Soviet Union. THE NEXT STEP AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IS THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SOVIET STATE, THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC.

But Stalinism controls not only the Russian Communist Party, which as a revolutionary force it has destroyed, but the Communist International. Just as, inside of Russia, Stalin gathered around him henchmen like a Tammany Hall Boss, so he gathered the same type outside. The leaders of all the Communist Parties have been picked by Stalin. They are "his" men. Corrupted to the core, they have carried out his views of Socialism in One Country. There was no protest from them when Stalin was too busy with other matters to attend to the Spanish

Revolution. There was no protest from them when he did not find it worthy even to comment on the destruction of the great German revolutionary movement. Stalinism has killed the world revolution, but to these tools, everything is still fine and dandy. The Communist Parties have become essentially only the agencies of the Russian Consuls and Ambassadors in those countries. Their sole slogan has become "Defend the Soviet Union" and this they interpret in the worst opportunist class-collaborationist way.

The degeneration of the Communist Parties throughout the world forced Stalin to turn all the more to his own Russian forces and to look with more contempt than ever upon the international working class. He uses the other Communist Parties only as tools to prevent intervention in Russia. To conceive that Russia is only one step in the world revolution and that, just as the workers must defend Soviet Russia, Soviet Russia must defend the international revolution, is too much to expect from him. Under such circumstances the Communist Parties have become mere antiwar, mere pacifist bodies. As they have lost their influence in the labor movement, they try to win the plaudits of the liberal pacifists. As the Stalinist bureaucracy turns from the workers, it turns to deals and mancuvers with the international imperialists. It firmly believes it can build Socialism within one country alone and that the capitalists will allow it to exist side by side with then.

The advance of Japanese Imperialism, the great victory of Fascism in Germany, the four-power pact, the weakening of the Soviet Union, the destruction of the Communist International—all of these things show that soon a united interventionary army will begin the invasion of the Soviet Union.

We must save the Soviet Union. We must reinstall the dictatorship of the proletariat. We must build up genuine fighting bodies throughout the world. We must reject this vicious Utopia of Socialism in One Country, a type of national Socialism that has meant the end of the Communist international just as surely as the national Socialism of the Socialist Parties brought their end in 1914. We must prepare our ground for the great conflicts with Fascism that are yet to come. WE CAN DO THIS ONLY BY BUILDING A NEW BOLSHEVIK INTERNA-

TIONAL AND NEW COMMUNIST PARTIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

There is no absolute hopelessness for the capitalist class in the world. There is no automatic collapse of capitalism with all its horrors. There is no guarantee that each time the workers enter into insurrectionary battles they must win. Socialism is inevitable only because sooner or later the workers must learn by the experiences of the past, because they will throw out all traces of reformism and other enemy class ideologies from their midst and, with single purpose and iron will, march forward to eventual victory.

We in America have a special job before us. It is quite possible that the law of uneven development of capitalism will mean that while in Europe Fascism is a becoming victorious, in America it is the working class that is making the big strides forward. It is quite possible that, with the destruction of European Communism, the center of international Communism will have to move to the United States. Here in the United States we have the most important reactionary forces to defeat. Here we have great opportunities for work.

At the same time, here in the United States, we have never had a genuine Communist Party. The American Communist Party displays all of the vices but very little of the virtues of the Russian Party. The isolation of the Communists from the labor movement, their collapse during the depression, their utter failure to grow or to root themselves in American life, shows us that we have little to hope for from that direction.

Yet a genuine Communist Party must eventually be built. The American workingclass shall not be backward forever. And the developing tenseness of relationships, and growing Europeanization of American politics, demonstrate that the time is not far off when that job will be done. Under the leadership of the International Left Opposition, and in the struggle against opportunism, especially Stalinism, we shall build such a Communist Party.

Two and a half years ago the Communist League of Struggle was organized. It declared its adherence to the International Left Opposition. It pointed out the degeneration and bankruptcy

of the Communist International. It opened up a withering fire against all form of opportunism. It has been the first to point out the fascist tendencies in the Roosevelt regime. It has been the first to point out the potentialities for radicalization among the workers of America. It has been the first to point out that only the Communists can organize the unorganized in the United States and actually went out to do so. The tendency represented in the Communist League of Struggle was the first to penetrate into the South and to organize unions there. It has been the first to point out the coming strike wave and to raise the slogan of a General Strike of limited duration to compel Congress to act on measures of social reform and social insurance. It has been the first to raise a correct program for the struggle for Negro emancipation. In a hundred ways it already has proved that it bears within it the germs of the Bolshevism of the future.

It is not in vain that for fourteen years the advanced section of the American workingclass have been in convulsions trying to found a really vanguard Bolshevik group. To those who wish to join such a group we declare

JOIN THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF STRUGGLE (Adhering to the International Left Opposition)!

Read The Class Struggle, official organ of the Communist League of Struggle. Office: 133 Second Ave., Rm. 24. New York City.

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